

## Montana CSPD

The Office of Public Instruction Special Education Endorsement Project was created to help school districts fill vacant special education teaching positions.

The project is part of Montana's [Comprehensive System of Personnel Development \(CSPD\)](#), which is included under Montana Administrative Rule (ARM) number 10.16.3135 in the Montana State IDEA Plan and is regulated by Accreditation and Licensure Rule 10.55.707. School districts and cooperatives participating in the OPI Special Education Endorsement Project are subject to all administrative rules of the Montana Board of Public Education.

Montana CSPD works to ensure that all education personnel are adequately prepared and receive continuing education.

Revised: Winter 2025

**For questions contact:**  
Annette Vicedo Young,  
Special Education Endorsement  
Project Director  
Montana OPI Special Education  
PO Box 202501  
Helena, MT 59602-2501  
Email: [ayoung3@mt.gov](mailto:ayoung3@mt.gov)  
Phone: 406-444-0299

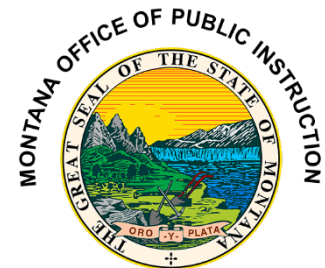
[Link to Special Education  
Endorsement Project Website](#)



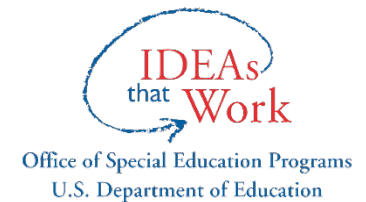
See our website at:

<https://opi.mt.gov/Educators/School-Climate-Student-Wellness/Special-Education>

# OPI Special Education Endorsement Project



Federally funded by the  
Montana Office of Public Instruction  
under the Individuals with Disabilities  
Education Act (IDEA)



## Criteria for Acceptance

- ◆ To serve the whole state of Montana, only one application from a district may be eligible for admission. Applications submitted by September 1 will be given priority.
- ◆ The school district or special education cooperative must have advertised the special education vacancy statewide on <https://opi.mt.gov/Educators/Licensure/Jobs-for-Teachers> website for a minimum of one month and provide documentation to that effect.
- ◆ The district must state that no special education endorsed applicants applied for the position.
- ◆ The candidate must hold a Class 1 or 2 (Class 5 candidates are not eligible) Montana Teaching Certificate and have been offered and signed a contract for the advertised special education teaching position.
- ◆ All candidates admitted to the project need a mentor for their first year and the district should identify the mentor. The mentor should have three years of teaching in special education and have completed training in mentoring which can be through their school district. If there is no mentor available within the district, then arrangements to locate a mentor will be made with the Project Director.
- ◆ The candidate must complete their special education endorsement within three years of their project acceptance date. This includes the program requirement of student teaching in their own classroom.
- ◆ Candidates admitted to the project must hold a full-time special education teaching position in Montana public schools for two years after obtaining the special education endorsement.

**To be accepted the candidate will be required to sign a 5-year contract with OPI that stipulates the following:**

- ◆ Should the candidate fail to complete the required coursework to obtain the special education endorsement within three years from the date of the agreement, the candidate will be required to repay all sums paid by the OPI under the agreement.
- ◆ Should the candidate fail to complete the required two years of service in a Montana school, the candidate will repay all sums paid by the OPI under the agreement.

**Submit the following documents to:**

[ayoung3@mt.gov](mailto:ayoung3@mt.gov)

- ◆ Completed [application form](#).
- ◆ Completed [participation agreement](#) signed by all stakeholders.
- ◆ Letter from the candidate describing their teaching experience and commitment to teaching in the school.
- ◆ Letter from school district or special education cooperative verifying the applicant has been offered and signed a contract.
- ◆ Copy of the position advertisement.
- ◆ Copy of Montana Teaching Certificate: Class 1 or Class 2 (Class 5 candidates are not eligible).
- ◆ Copies of unofficial transcripts from all universities the applicant has attended that show the semester of student teaching and degree or degrees.
- ◆ Plan of Study from the participating MT Institution of Higher Education, signed by the advisor.

## Participating Institutions of Higher Education

### Carroll College

Dr. Kathleen Gilboy  
406-447-4376  
[kagilboy@carroll.edu](mailto:kagilboy@carroll.edu)

### Montana State University Billings

Dr. Mel Sullivan-Walker  
406-657-2335  
[Melissa.Walker4@msubillings.edu](mailto:Melissa.Walker4@msubillings.edu)

### University of Montana

Dr. Trent Atkins  
406-243-4978  
[trent.atkins@mso.umt.edu](mailto:trent.atkins@mso.umt.edu)

Dr. Morgen Alwell  
406-243-5512  
[morgen.alwell@umontana.edu](mailto:morgen.alwell@umontana.edu)

### The University of Montana Western

Dr. Goodson Dzenga, BCBA  
Office: 406-683-7177  
Cell: 412-886-8245  
[goodson.dzenga@umwestern.edu](mailto:goodson.dzenga@umwestern.edu)